

OEMC Contact: Megan Castle
303-866-2262

BIOMASS ENERGY GRANT AWARDED TO COLORADO

DENVER, CO, August 17, 2005 – Governor Bill Owens announced today that the Colorado Partnership for Biomass Utilization, Education and Bioenergy Production has received a \$100,000 grant from the Western Governors' Association (WGA). The grant will be used to boost the use of bioenergy and reduce excessive build up of forest fuels that contribute to wildfires.

"Encouraging bioenergy production will lead to healthier forests and offer a clean, renewable energy source for Colorado," Owens said. "It could also benefit economic development in many of our state's rural areas."

The Partnership, lead by the Colorado Office of Energy Management and Conservation (OEMC) and the Colorado State Forest Service, will study the availability of biomass supplies; develop course curriculums in using forest biomass; provide technical assistance on how to use the fuel to heat facilities; and survey industries to determine what they would need to begin using biomass to co-fire their facilities.

The project addresses two of the Western governors' highest priorities: increasing the use of clean and diversified energy and improving the health of the region's forests. WGA's Western Regional Biomass Energy Program offers grants for joint projects between state energy offices and state forestry and/or agricultural offices. Biomass projects include the use of renewable organic materials, such as forestry and agricultural crop residues, as well as wood and food processing wastes.

The grant program was initiated by WGA and the U.S. Department of Energy through the National Biomass State and Regional Partnership. In this first year of the Grant Program, four states received biomass program funding totaling nearly \$250,000.

About Colorado Governor's Office of Energy Management and Conservation (OEMC):

As the lead state agency on energy efficiency and conservation issues, OEMC serves the people and businesses of Colorado through demonstration and education of viable, real-world solutions to the need to reduce our reliance on foreign energy. OEMC serves as a statewide advocate of energy efficiency through its programs and partnerships that benefit Colorado's economic and natural environment. OEMC receives federal funding, including U.S. Department of Energy, but no Colorado state tax dollars to support its activities. Contact OEMC at www.state.co.us/oemc or call toll-free, 800-632-6662.

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